

**METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR PROVIDING CUSTOMIZED  
AUDIO RESPONSES TO INCOMING PHONE CALLS**

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

5 A telephone answering system (100) and method (200) that permits a  
user to immediately generate a customized playback message in response  
to an incoming call without having to actually answer the call. The system  
(100) can include a ring detector (104), a command interface (114), a  
controller (110) and a telephone network interface (102). In response to an  
incoming call, the ring detector (104) alerts the called party and causes the  
10 controller (110) to activate the command interface (114). The command  
interface (114) is activated for a predetermined time while the call is still  
ringing. While activated, the called party can select or enter a playback  
message. The playback message can be a pre-recorded audio message  
stored within the device, or a voice message spoken by the called party  
15 during the activation period. After the playback message is selected by the  
called party, the telephone system (100) answers the incoming call and  
automatically plays the customized message to the calling party.

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